

THE TRIAL

BY WLADYSŁAW REYMONT

The door opened suddenly with a bang, letting the wind into the room, and a silent, sinister crowd of peasants began to pour in from the dark hall. They did not even say, "The Lord be praised!"^[18]

The miller dropped his spoon on the table, and looked round in astonishment from one to the other. Then he turned down the lamp which was flaring from the draught.

"There are rather a lot of you," he muttered.

"There are more waiting outside," Jędrzej, one of the peasants, said, coming forward quickly.

"Have you any business to settle with me?"

"We didn't come here just for a talk," someone said, shutting the door.

"Then sit down; I shall have finished supper in a minute."

"To your good health! We will wait a while...."

The miller began to sip up his porridge hastily. The peasants meanwhile settled themselves on the benches round the stove, warming their backs and carefully watching Jędrzej, who had sat down by the table and was leaning his elbows on it in deep reflection.

"Beastly weather this!" the miller accosted them.

"Real March weather."

"It's always like this before the spring."

Here the conversation broke off again, and the only thing to be heard in the silence of the room was the miller's spoon scraping along the earthenware bowl. But outside someone was stamping the mud off his boots, while at times the howling gusts of wind struck the walls till they creaked, and the rain beat against the steamed window-panes.

"Jadwiś!" called the miller, wiping his short moustache with his hand.

A strong and very good-looking girl, not wearing a peasant's dress, appeared from a side room. She threw a keen glance at the peasants, and, taking the bowl in her arm, went out again with a rolling gait.

"What is this business?" began the miller, taking snuff.

Not a hand was stretched out towards the snuff; the peasants' faces had suddenly clouded. Someone cleared his throat, others scratched their heads in indecision, and they all looked at Jędrzej, who, straightening himself and fixing his light, searching eyes on the miller, said slowly:

"We have come to make you tell us who the thieves were."

The miller started back, stared, spread out his arms, and stuttered: "In the Name of the Father and the Son! How should I know that?..."

"We think you are the man to know," Jędrzej said in a lower voice, standing up. The other peasants also got up, and planted themselves round the miller in a circle, like a thick wall, fixing him with eyes as keen as a hawk's, so that the blood mounted to his face. "We have come to you for the truth," Jędrzej whispered impressively.

"And you must tell us—you've got to!" the rest echoed in low, stern voices.

"What truth? Are you mad? How am I to know? Am I a party to thieves? Or what?..." He spoke quickly, turning the light up and down with trembling hands.

"We know very well that you're honest; but you know who the thieves are. So come, how was it? They stole your horses in the autumn, but you did nothing; and not long ago they stole money from you—you even caught them in your bedroom—and again

you did nothing and didn't have them taken up, and never even told the policeman about them."

"Why should I? Do you want me to lose more money? What good would the Court or the police do? They'd catch the wind in the field and bring it bound to me! May God repay those scoundrels at the Judgment Day for the wrong they have done me!"

"It's plain, from all you say, that you're afraid to let out who they are."

"If I knew, do you think I'd be the worse off through them, and not tell? Was it for nothing...."

"You keep going round in a circle," Jędrzej interrupted him roughly. "We didn't come here to quarrel with you, but to get at the truth; and we're in a hurry, for the whole village is waiting, some outside your house and some in the cottages. So we ask you as a friend to tell us who stole your money."

"If I had known it myself, the Court and all the village would have known by now," the miller excused himself anxiously, looking in alarm at the set, suspicious faces round him. But Jędrzej threw himself forward impatiently, and his eyes shone with anger. Without thinking what he was doing, he took the miller by the shoulder, and said abruptly in a firm voice:

"What you are saying isn't true! But if you will swear to it in church, we will trust you and leave you in peace."

The miller sat down and began to talk with feigned amusement:

"Ha, ha! You're in a larky mood, I see, as if it were Carnival. Of course, if you all go in a crowd to a fellow and threaten him with sticks, he'll be ready to swear to anything you like. I tell you the truth: I know nothing about this, and I know nothing about the thieves. You can believe me if you like; if not, then don't. But you won't force me to swear to it, for you have no right to try me...."

He stood up, rolling his eyes defiantly.

"Indeed, that's what we came for—and to carry out the sentence justly," Jędrzej said so firmly that the miller started back in terror, and was unable to get out a word.

The peasants surrounded him in gloomy silence, fixing their burning eyes on him, and shuffling their feet impatiently. So menacing and full of stern resolution did they look that he was at a loss to know what to do, and merely stood wiping the perspiration from his bald head and casting frightened glances round the circle of stubborn, set faces. He realized that this was not only idle talk, but the beginning of something terrible. He sat down again on a bench, and took pinch after pinch of snuff to help himself to arrive at some decision. Then Jędrzej went up to him, and said solemnly:

"You neither want to tell the truth nor to swear to it. So it's plain you are a party to those thieves!"

The miller sprang up as hastily as if something close beside him had been struck by lightning, upsetting the bench as he did so.

"Jesus! Mary! have I to do with thieves? You say this to me?"

"I say it and repeat it!"

"And we repeat it too!" they all shouted together, shaking their fists at him. Their heads were bent forward; their glances were like vultures' beaks, ready to tear.

Attracted by the noise, Jadwiś burst into the room and stood petrified.

"What's up here?" she asked anxiously.

The peasants dropped their clenched hands, and began to clear their throats.

"We don't want women here, listening and blabbing it all out afterwards," someone said angrily.

"She'd better go back where she came from."

"Look after the geese, and don't come poking your nose into men's business!" they shouted still louder. Jadwiś ran out of the room in a furious temper, slamming the door after her.

Again Jędrzej stretched his hand forward, and said:

"I tell you, miller, the time for trial and punishment has come!"

"And for bringing order into the world!..."

"And for weeding out wrong and planting justice!..." The words rang out menacingly, and again the peasants shook their clenched fists in the miller's frightened face.

"Good God! what do you fellows want? What am I guilty of?" he gasped, terrified, looking round from side to side. But, without heeding him, Jędrzej began to speak quickly and in a low, hard voice which penetrated the miller like frost.

"As he won't confess, he is guilty. Take him, and we will try him at the church.... Everyone who wrongs the people will be brought to a just trial, and be heavily sentenced. Take him, you fellows!"

"Jesus! Mary! Men!..." the miller stammered in deadly fear, looking round distractedly, for the peasants all advanced towards him together. "Men!... How can I tell you?... I have sworn to it. They'll burn the house down or kill me if I say who they are.... Merciful Jesu! Let me be! I'll tell you everything! I'll tell you!" His voice quavered, for several hands had already seized him and were dragging him towards the door.

It was some time before he was able to speak. He fell panting on the table. They stood round him, and someone gave him a little water to drink, while others said in a friendly way:

"Don't be afraid; no one who is on the side of the people will have a hair on his head touched."

"Only confess the whole truth."

"We know you're an honest man, and will tell us the scoundrels' names."

The miller writhed inwardly, like an eel when it is trodden upon; he went hot and cold, and became alternately pale and red. Suddenly he drew himself up, ready for anything. But before he began to speak he glanced into the next room.

There was a glimpse of Jadwiś, as though she were just jumping away from behind the door. He looked out of the window, and then, standing up before the group of peasants, he crossed himself and said:

"I am telling you the truth as though I were at Confession; it was the two Gajdas and the Starszy."^[19]

There was silence. The men stood petrified and stared at one another, panting and drawing long, hoarse breaths. Jędrzej was the first to speak:

"That's what we were thinking, but we couldn't be sure. Now we know what we want to know. We know them, the filthy scoundrels!" He banged his fist on the table. "They are weeds that must be torn up by the roots so that they mayn't spread. Both the Gajdas—father and son? And the Starszy is the third? Then, in God's Name, we'll go to them, and you'll go with us, miller, so that you may tell them the truth to their face."

"I'll go and tell them—that I will! It's as if a weight had fallen from my shoulders. I'll stand up and tell them they're robbers and thieves. Good God! I knew what they were up to, but I daren't breathe a word about it. May they be broken upon the wheel for my sin in being such a coward! I was ashamed to look people in the face when everyone was calling out about those robberies.... The rascals! they took away my horses; I sent them the ransom through the Starszy, but they didn't give them back.... And afterwards I caught them in my bedroom: they fleeced me of every penny, and they threatened me with their knives.... As if that weren't enough, I had to swear I'd not let out who'd done it!"

"The whole neighbourhood has suffered through them."

"They have stolen a great many horses and cows from people, and a lot of money."

"It was easy for them to do all that, for the Starszy gave them the go-by, and went shares with them...."

"They had a gay time at our expense; let them pay for it now...."

"If everyone talks, I'll have my say, too," someone exclaimed. "I know that the Gajdas betrayed the priest for having married the young couple from Podlasia."^[20]

"What!... They even betrayed the priest?"

"And the postmaster's daughters who taught the children^[21]—it must have been they who betrayed them?"

"So it was! So it was! We know that!" the miller asserted rancorously.

"Then it's they who robbed and killed the Jews in the forest!"

"Sure enough, it's the Gajdas! It's they!... The carrion!... The mean wretches! The scoundrels!" The peasants began to curse, thumping their sticks on the ground and stamping. Their eyes shot fire, and they raised their clenched fists.

"Let's have done with them! Punish those swine! Try them! Try them!"

"Then let's go quickly before they escape us!" Jędrzej cried.

"Skin them!... Batter them to death like mad dogs!" they shouted, pressing through the doorway. The miller blew out the light and went with them.

They were no sooner outside the house than Jadwiś ran out. She glided stealthily along the wall, looking anxiously after them and wondering wherever they could be going on a night like that, and what their reason for going could be.

For it was a real March night, cold, wet, and windy. The whole world was wrapped in thick darkness. The sleet lashed the men's faces and took away their breath, and the damp cold penetrated them to the marrow; the wind swept through the orchards from all sides; the snowy ridges of the fields alone showed white in the blackness. But, without noticing the wretched weather, the peasants walked along briskly, spurning the mud from under their feet. They went stealthily one after the other past the low cottages which sat along the highroad like tired old market women taking a rest, or nestled in their orchards so that only the snowy roofs, resembling white hoods, could be seen through the swaying trees.

Jędrzej walked in front. Every now and then he gave orders in a low voice, and someone left the line, ran up to a window, and, hammering at it with his fist, cried:

"Come out! It's time!"

The light in the cottage would be extinguished at once, and the door would creak. Black shadows, feeling their way with sticks, would creep out and join the crowd in silence.

They now walked still closer together and with even greater caution, looking carefully in all directions.

Suddenly Jędrzej looked back nervously; he had distinctly heard the mud splash as if someone were running after them, and there was a shadow creeping along stealthily under the hedge. But directly the peasants stopped all was quiet and there was nothing to be seen; the only sounds were the roar of the wind, and now and again the dogs barking furiously in their kennels.

They moved on more slowly, but several now began to cross themselves in terror; some sighed, while others felt a cold shudder go through them. Yet no one said a word or hesitated; they went forward with a steady movement like an oncoming, threatening cloud drawing together slowly and silently before it suddenly flashes with lightning and scatters hail on the ground.

They passed the public-house, which was brilliantly lighted; some of them sniffed in the familiar smell, and would have liked to have gone inside to have a drink. This, however, Jędrzej would not allow. He made them draw up into the middle of the road, for they had now nearly reached the policeman's house; its white walls shone in the distance. The lively strains of a concertina came through the brightly lighted windows.

The peasants stopped opposite the house, and scarcely dared to breathe.

"Now keep a good look-out," Jędrzej said, "and the minute the bell rings, go into the room all together and get him by the head, and a rope round him. But be careful he doesn't give you the slip, or else he'll do a lot of harm.... Don't make a noise and scare him away."

Several peasants silently left the crowd and crept up to the house in the darkness. In the meantime the others marched on quickly towards the large square at the end of the village, where only a few little lights were shining. The space between these last houses and the snowy fields was filled by the church and a thicket of trees which looked like a black mountain rocking slightly in the breeze.

The Gajdas' house stood near the church, a little way from the road, and was partly hidden by a large orchard, so that the lights from the windows showed through the close branches like wolves' eyes. The men turned towards it at once, but in places the mud was knee-deep, for the puddles had become like pools, and frozen snow-drifts blocked the road. They went carefully step by step to avoid the obstructions, and made a circle as though intentionally prolonging the way. Near the fence they halted for an instant; Jędrzej bade them keep silence, stole to the side of the window, and peeped in.

The room was large; the whitewashed walls were hung with pictures, and lighted by a lamp suspended from the ceiling. Several people were sitting at the table under the lamp, having supper, and talking together in low voices. The bright fire crackling on the hearth threw red gleams over one side of the room. A girl was walking up and down, nursing a screaming baby.

"They're at home—they're in there!" Jędrzej whispered, turning to the crowd. He was trembling all over, and almost unable to breathe or to speak and tell half the men to go and watch the house from the backyard and fields.

But, quickly composing himself, he led the rest boldly through the gate up to the house. They had already reached it, when the dogs began to howl so dismally somewhere in the backyard that they hesitated for a moment.

"That's our lot has come upon the dogs. Come on! If they put up a fight in there, knock them down with your sticks, the swine! —No pity!" Jędrzej whispered. Dragging the miller after him and crossing himself, he walked sharply into the hall, the other peasants close behind him, shoulder to shoulder. They entered the room in a body, looking black and determined.

There was some commotion. The Gajdas jumped up from the table, their mouths open with amazement. But the elder one recovered his presence of mind in a trice, and, dropping on to a stool, he pulled his son by the sleeve to make him sit down too.

"Glad to see you!" he cried with ironical friendliness. "Ha, ha! What grand guests! Even the miller and Jędrzej! Quite a party!"

"Sit down, neighbours!" the young Gajda put in, throwing frightened glances round the peasants, and mechanically dipping his spoon into the dish.

But no one sat down, and not a hand was stretched out in greeting. They all stood as still as posts, and Jędrzej alone came forward, saying sternly:

"Stop eating; we have more important business in hand."

"Business? Supper is more important to us!" the old man snapped insolently.

"I tell you: stop! So stop!" Jędrzej thundered.

"Hah! You are very domineering in a strange cottage!"

"I command, and you must obey, you dirty dogs!"

The Gajdas jumped to their feet, pale and shaking with fear. But they clenched their teeth and looked as fierce as wolves, ready for anything.

"What do you want?" the younger man asked, choking with fury.

"To try you and punish you—you robbers!" Jędrzej cried in a terrible voice. It was as if the ceiling were falling on them, for they cowered under these words.

Death seemed to sweep through the silence which followed, for even breathing ceased for a moment; only the baby began to cry louder than before. Suddenly the Gajdas sprang towards the door, the younger brandishing his knife, the older man snatching up his axe; but before they could strike, the peasants had thrown themselves upon them, and in the scuffle which followed blows from sticks rained down upon them, a score of hands grasped them by the head, neck, and legs, and they were lifted bodily from the ground, like fragile plants.

The storm went round the room; there were cries and confusion; tables, benches, and chairs flew in all directions; the women sobbed; with curses and shouts, a convulsed mass of men rolled on to the floor, hit against the wall several times, and finally fell asunder.

At length the Gajdas lay on the ground, bound with ropes, like sheep, and shouting at the top of their voices. They cursed horribly as they struggled to free themselves.

"Take them to the church door; they shall be tried there!" Jędrzej ordered.

They dragged them out of the house and almost along the ground across the square, driving them on with sticks, for they resisted, yelling with all their might. The women ran by their side, sobbing and whining for pity; the men kicked them away as if they were so many bitches. "Peal the church bell! Let all the village come together!" the miller cried.

The landscape was lighted by the snow which had begun to fall heavily.

The bell rang out with a deep sound, like a fire-alarm, and then went on pealing without ceasing, mournfully and ominously, so that the crows flew up cawing from the belfry and circled over the church. From the village came a crowd of women and children, running and shouting.

"Men! Have pity! Help! For Heaven's sake!" the Gajdas shouted, trying desperately to free themselves. But no one answered; the whole crowd went on in deep silence. Thus they entered the churchyard, took their prisoners up to the church door, and threw them down there.

"What are we guilty of? What do you mean? Help!" the Gajdas shouted once more, making an effort to get up. But someone gave them a kick, and they fell down again like logs, cursing and vowing dreadful vengeance on the whole village.

Standing with his back against the church door, Jędrzej took off his cap and cried in a loud, solemn voice:

"Brothers! Poles!"

The women's screaming was hushed, and the crowd drew into a close circle, straining to listen, for the wet snow, which was falling thickly, made hearing difficult.

"I tell you this, brothers: just as the peasant goes out with his harrow in the spring to rake his field which he ploughed in the autumn, that it may be free from weeds before he puts in good seed, so now the time has come to weed out the wrong in the world.... They have already done this in other districts and parishes; they have turned out the District Clerk at Olsza, they have killed the thieves at Wola, and driven away others from Grabica. And the people have taken this upon themselves—upon themselves; for things in this world are so badly managed that we peasants have to work and sweat, pay rates, and send up recruits. But if any of us has a grievance, there is only God and useless grumbling left him."

"Ay, that's it—that's it!"

"This I tell you: the time has come for us peasant people not to look for help to anyone else, but to rely on ourselves. We must manage for ourselves; we must defend ourselves from being ill-treated, and take the law into our own hands! We have waited for long years, and had to put up with all kinds of wrongs done to us, and no one has come to the rescue or helped us in any way. For the Courts are not for those who want justice; the laws are not for peasants; and there's no protection for those who have been wronged. Everyone with any sense knows that. So there seems to be no other way but do as other villages are doing."

"Kill the carrion! Finish them off! Tear them with wild horses!" they began to shout frantically at once, attacking the Gajdas with their sticks.

"Silence! Stop there, you fools!" Jędrzej roared, putting himself in front of the Gajdas to protect them. "Wait! We all know they are robbers, thieves, and traitors who deserve punishment; but first let everyone who has anything to charge them with come forward and say it to their face. For we have come here to sentence and not to murder them. We don't want to play off our revenge on them, but to punish them justly."

The people crowded together more closely, for everyone felt awkward at being the first to come forward. There was a loud hubbub of voices as they recalled their grievances and pressed with threats towards the prisoners. At last the miller stepped forward, and, raising his hand, said solemnly:

"I swear before God and men that they stole my horses and four hundred roubles. I caught them in the act.... At the point of the knife they forced me to swear that I would not give them away. They threatened me with revenge if I did. They are robbers of the worst sort."

"And I swear that the Gajdas stole my cow," said another man.

"And they took my sow."

"And my mare and foal," others deposed.

The assembled people listened in grim silence.

The snow suddenly ceased to fall and the wind increased, beating round the church and tearing at the swaying, moaning trees; large grey clouds flew across the sky; but the steady voices continued their accusations uninterrupted. At intervals there was an ominous murmur and the thumping of sticks, or else the Gajdas cried:

"That's not true! They're giving wrong evidence! The thieves from Wola did all that! Don't believe it!"

But fresh people came forward, accusing them of still heavier crimes.

And finally they reproached them with the murder of the Jews and with betraying the postmaster's daughters and the priest, with committing arson, joining in drinking bouts with the police, and not going to church: any known misdemeanour was hastily raked up and thrown furiously at their miserable heads. There was a great clamour, for each man tried to shout down the other, everyone cursed and swore to avenge himself, and was so eager to beat the Gajdas that Jędrzej, unable to restrain them all, shouted angrily:

"Hold your noise, and let me have a say!"

The hubbub subsided slightly, and only the women continued their quarrelsome chattering.

"Do you plead guilty?" he asked, bending over them.

"No! We're wrongly charged! They are lying—that's all their spite! We swear to it!" they cried in despair.

"If you plead guilty, you will get a lighter sentence," he urged them, relenting a little.

The miller, Jędrzej, and those few who were less excited, still tried to protect them from the enraged crowd, which moved on towards them like a storm, shouting and flourishing sticks. But the women managed to jump at them and scratch them spitefully.

The scene at the church door became more terrible every instant.

"We must have the priest here before we finish with them!... The priest!" the miller cried suddenly.

The people stopped. Someone ran to fetch the Vicar.

"Or shall we put off carrying out the sentence till to-morrow?" the miller proposed.

Thumping their sticks together, the crowd shouted:

"Let's have done with them!... No need for such scoundrels to have a priest!... Let them die like dogs! No delay, or else they'll run and fetch the Cossacks! Kill them off!"

But the Gajdas, feeling that this brought a possibility of rescue, began to implore despairingly:

"Men, have pity! Send the priest; we want to make our confession! The priest!..."

Unfortunately for them, the priest was not at home. He had gone away somewhere the previous evening.

"Then let them make their confession before all the people," someone said.

"Very good! Yes, let them confess—and tell the truth!" the rest assented.

Someone cut the ropes binding their hands, and set them on their knees before the church door.

"Open the church! They are going to make their confession! Open it!" shouted many voices.

But Jędrzej exclaimed: "No need of that! It's a sin to bring such scoundrels into the house of God; it's enough that we allow them to come on to consecrated ground. Quiet there!" he called to the dissatisfied women who kept on talking; and, bending over the Gajdas, he said:

"Now confess; but only say the plain truth. The people have power to forgive you your trespasses." He knelt down beside them, and all the rest followed his example, sighing and crossing themselves.

The Gajdas mumbled something, looking round meanwhile in all directions.

"Speak up! Louder! They even want to cheat God!" the crowd shouted indignantly.

The elder Gajda, who seemed to have lost heart completely, began to shiver, and burst out crying, confessing his sins through heavy sobs.

A dead silence spread through the crowd; no one dared to breathe, or even cough; that pitiful voice, spreading through the darkness like a pool of blood, was the only sound besides the bell pealing overhead and the sighing trees.

The people were awestruck, and their flesh began to creep. They beat their breasts in terror; here and there a moan broke from them; an icy fear penetrated them, for Gajda, while all the time throwing the blame on his son and the policeman, not only pleaded guilty to what he was accused of, but to many other even worse crimes....

When he had finished he prostrated himself with outstretched arms, striking his head on the threshold of the church door. His entreaties for mercy were so piteous that many people in the crowd began to cry also.

"Now let Kacper confess!" the men howled. "Kacper! Get on, you blackguard! Be quick!" They began to beat and kick him, till he raised himself, exclaiming furiously:

"You're blackguards yourselves! You want to murder innocent people! You're thieves and traitors yourselves!"

He cursed and threatened them dreadfully, till the old man begged him to stop.

"You'd better knuckle under, son. Confess; then perhaps they'll pardon you. Knuckle under!..."

"I won't! I won't beg for mercy from blackguards! Dogs! Damned scoundrels! Carrion! I've no need to confess myself. Let them kill me—the swine! Only let them dare to do it! The Cossacks will give it them back for me to-morrow. Only let them touch me!"

He roared this like a wild beast, and, suddenly springing to his feet and belabouring the nearest bystanders with his fists, he began to beat his way madly through the crowd. The old man slipped after him like a wolf. There was a fearful outcry, but the Gajdas were instantly overpowered and thrown down, like a bundle of rags, where they had lain before.

"They are trying to run away!" Jędrzej shouted angrily. "They are threatening vengeance! Punish them, you fellows! Beat them to death like mad dogs! Let everyone have a go at them—everyone—whoever believes in God!"

The crowd swayed like a forest, and flung itself upon the men; a hundred sticks rose and fell with a hollow crash, and the air was rent with a terrific roar as though the whole world were breaking to pieces. It was like a whirlwind raging and then suddenly subsiding. Only curses and women's shrieks and the thud of sticks were heard in the darkness now, while at moments wild, piercing cries rang out from the men who were being murdered.

And a few minutes later there was nothing at the church door but a black shapeless mass pounded into the slush; it gave out a sickly smell of blood.

The bell ceased. But the men had not yet had time to get their breath before the news spread from the village that the policeman had escaped. The peasants came running one after the other, talking and shouting:

"The policeman has made off! We went into his room when the bell began to ring, and he had gone."

"He escaped through the larder. The miller's daughter had warned him."

"Of course; we saw her go in! She gave him the tip. It was she!"

"That's a lie!" the miller bawled, springing towards them and threatening them with his fists.

"We all know that she got herself into trouble with the policeman—all of us!" the women cried; and everyone suddenly knew something about the matter, and put in his word.

Then Jędrzej began to speak again: "You people, listen! Brothers! We have punished only these; but the biggest thief has run away. We must catch him.... For that is how we will punish everyone who does wrong to the people, steals, and is a traitor. Jump on your horses and hunt him down! Quick! Get on your horses, you fellows! He has made off to the town; catch him! Alive or dead, we must get him! Hurry up there, or else he may play us a dirty trick! Look sharp!"

They poured out of the churchyard and ran hurriedly towards the village. In no time a number of peasants were tearing towards the town at full speed, their horses scattering the mud from under their feet.

The village became almost deserted, except for a few women in the churchyard, who were crying bitterly.

Keeping to the middle of the road, and heedless of the sleet beating into his face, the miller dragged himself homewards. He breathed with difficulty, and often paused, sighing heavily. At times he staggered, at times he stopped short, as though petrified; and now and then a low, pained whisper broke from the depth of his tortured heart.

"You—my daughter! So that's what you are!—With the policeman!" he repeated involuntarily.

And he clenched his fist in his bitterness; but he was trembling as in a fever, and heavy tears rolled fast down his face.
